[203 cont.]

[648] The order given in this letter was not carried out. On the contrary, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave orders that the Kalmuks as well as the Kazaks were to be prevented from crossing the Ural to attack each other.

[726] It must be supposed that the government changed its mind because of the troubles which broke out at that time on the Siberian frontier. The Dzungarian kungtaidji suddenly advanced with his troops toward the Russian border, and his subjects began to threaten the garrisons with war, while the rumor spread that he wished to attack the establishments of Kolyvano-Voskresensk, where he was attracted by the mines of precious metals.

At this time the Dzungars were still formidable, and an attack by them could not be compared to the raids of the Kazaks. Therefore it was indispensable to prepare adequate forces against them. As a result the insolence of the Kazaks was forgotten, and Nepluev received an order (1) to persuade them to

1. See the ukase of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of November 3, 1744.

make raids against the Dzungars.

It was a difficult task to carry out. Khan Abulkhair still [186] held resentment against Russia in spite of the indulgence granted for his crimes. Abul Mahmet, khan of the Middle Horde, retreated toward Turkestan in order to avoid Abulkhair's intrigues, and thus practically put an end to his relations with the border authorities. Besides he had less need for the help of Russia than the protection of the kungtaidji of the Dzungars, who held his son as hostage. [642] Finally, Abul Mahmet sought to be khan at Turkestan, and this city recognized the authority of Galdan Tsyren.

[644] [204] Sultan Barak, who had sworn allegiance to Russia two years earlier, lived far from her border, and fearing the Dzungars more than the Russians, he, like Abul Mahmet, had given his son to Galdan Tsyren as hostage.

[642] The latter sought to attach the sultans and the common people of the Middle Horde to himself by every means. To attain

[213 cont.]

which was an absolutely extraordinary distinction among a people accustomed to treating their women as slaves, for they are not allowed to take any part in public affairs.

was brought to the knowledge of the court, and when Djanibek returned to the horde, he delivered a letter to her from the Chancellor, accompanied by a piece of precious brocade from the Empress.

At the same time as Nurali's election it was learned in St. Petersburg that the Dzungars, at the instigation of Sultan Barak, wished to attack the Little Horde. Although it was later proved that this rumor was false, measures were nevertheless taken to protect the horde from attack.

At Nepluev's invitation, Khan Nurali arrived near Orenburg in the month of July, 1749, escorted by the most distinguished sultans and elders and many commoners. He stopped on the left bank of the Ural River, where a camp had been prepared in advance in order to make a ceremony of his elevation with éclat. Like his father, he was received at the camp with the firing of cannon and with music. The ceremony began with the reading of the letters patent given to him and to his people. Next he was presented with a robe, a cap, and a saber sent by the court. Finally, the new khan knelt and swore an oath of fealty to Russia upon the Koran.

We will not give the details of this ceremony here, because they were repeated at every new elevation, and we will describe it elsewhere in the article on the customs and ceremonies of the Kazaks (2).

2. See Part III [this particular section on customs not translated].

[214] Having become the khan, Nurali demonstrated that he would not be content with the title but also wished to have the authority. His first request to the Russian government was to

[214 cont.]

X 648 obtain auxiliary troops in order to take vengeance against Barak
● [649] for the assassination of his father. In his second request he asked that those Kazaks whom he described as men of evil intent and harmful to Russia should be arrested on the borders.

Barak or his successors and their followers would have failed
X 643 to escape the vengeance of Abulkhair's sons, no doubt, if they had
642 received support in troops from Russia. But Nurali's exploits would not have ended there. He had planned to use the Russian troops against all his enemies, and especially against those princes of the Middle Horde who did not honor him and whom he wished to annihilate in order to subject their descent lines and tribes to his brothers, and then he would have made himself sole khan of both the Middle and the Little Hordes.

The second request, to arrest the Kazaks of evil intent on the Russian borders, also tended to the same end. He represented it as a necessary measure for the security of Russia, but ambition was its true motive.

On the one hand, the execution of this demand would have been really useful and indispensable for the Russians, for it would have made it possible to deliver into the hands of justice at least a part of the brigands, and, by adding to the power of the Khan,
[439] it would have given him new means of acting upon his people. But on the other hand, it could have been the source of an endless number of injustices and would have abolished the commercial exchange which was then just beginning to be established between the Russians and the Kazaks.

For these reasons, the Khan's first request was formally refused, and it was promised that the second would be considered.

X 648 Upon his departure from Orenburg, Nurali, in the name of
[765] his brothers and his mother Papai, voiced the desire to have some great monument on his father's grave and requested 1,000 workers for 15 days for this end (1). This wish was nothing more than the

[114]

1. All the conversations which the khans had with the border commanders [215] were written down in journals which have been

[221 cont.]
ordered that these stipends were not to start being paid until he had returned all the Russian prisoners and the Volga Kalmuks, or at least most of them. It was supposed that this would be carried out soon, but it turned out completely otherwise, and Nurali did not receive his stipends until five years after they had been assigned to him.

[222] At the beginning of 1750, Sultan Aichuvak, brother of the Khan, devised a plan, together with his father's friends, Batyr Djanibek, and a numerous band, composed partly of people of the Middle Horde but mostly made up of members of the Little Horde, to attack a people who lived near the Aral Sea and who were called the Aral people. These people were few in number and unaccustomed to war. One can easily guess that Aichuvak and his accomplices were successful in their enterprise and that they returned home with a large number of prisoners, studs of strange horses, and with many objects of different kinds which they had seized. But the Aral people were subjects of the khan of Khiva, who did not care to let the damage done to them pass without amends. Consequently he took into custody a large number of Nurali's subjects who had come to trade at the market in Khiva, and even his ambassador was arrested. There was no other way of releasing them than to return to the Aral people at least part of what they had lost, and especially the prisoners.

Shortly after this, Sultan Erali, following the example of his brother, attacked the Karakalpaks. But the troops which served as his army were too few, and in place of the booty he hoped for, he was taken prisoner and most of his companions were killed.

After having freed him, at the end of several months, Nurali arrived in Orenburg to see Nepluev and Tevkelev, but his journey did not have any important consequence.

Intercourse between the Middle Horde and Russia rarely took place at that time. Their khan, Abul Mahmet, had retreated to Turkestan where he lived until his death without being heard from; and Barak, as we have said, had been imprisoned /poisoned/. The successors to their power had not yet made the

[278 cont.]

promise given to Abulkhair by Empress Anna to choose khans only from among his successors. Third, Nurali had on his side not only his kinsmen but also the most powerful princes of the Middle Horde, the most important of whom was Sultan Khudai Mendi, a man as distinguished for his intelligence as for the large number of his followers and the authority he had acquired over them.

Vali Khan took a great interest in Nurali's fate and argued vigorously with the Russian government (2) on his behalf, and he

2. See Baron Igelstrom's report of December 18, 1786.

also wrote the same thing and warmly defended the descendants of Abulkhair, whom he called the father of all the Kazak khans subject to Russia and the first creator of the submission of the Little Horde (3). Finally, in 1787 a large part of the national

3. See another of Baron Igelstrom's reports, that of September 29, 1787.

assembly expressed the desire to see Nurali returned to the horde, out of respect for Abulkhair, who was considered a saint by many Kazaks. All these circumstances spoke in Nurali's favor, but they did not promise peace among the Kazaks in the future. Therefore, the execution of the latest intentions of the Russian government, to introduce in the Little Horde an organization conforming to that of the interior guberniyas continued unabated.

Meanwhile Batyr Syrym regained his freedom and once again began to influence the people in accord with the plans of the Orenburg authorities, which he seconded as long as they were not contrary to his own views. Under the guise of devotion to Russia and gratitude to the local authority which had chosen him as its instrument, Syrym helped Baron Igelstrom greatly in the reforms which he made in the Little Horde in 1787, which we are about to describe.

[287 cont.]

[648] This khan could not distinguish himself in such a short time and under such harassing circumstances. Yet his mind and his inclinations to support the Russian government in its views could have made him truly of service to his people.

[643] When the news of his death was received in St. Petersburg, the Empress commanded that inquiries be made among the Kazaks concerning whom they wished to have as khan and especially to find out their attitudes toward Sultan Ishim, eldest son of Nurali.

[554] The latter had long been known for his attachment to Russia and was deserving, both for his personal qualities and the respect of the people, of inheriting the rank which had belonged to his father, his grandfather, and his most distant ancestors.

[631] Events served to lend greater force to his rights. The Little Horde was divided into two factions, the first under the name of Sultan Abulgazi, being obedient to Syrym, his ally and his rival, and the second ruled by Ishim. Russia could not count upon the first, for she had already had to suffer much mischief from it, and could still expect only hostile acts on its part. The second group included the sultans and elders who were most attached to Russia, and thus she could not act otherwise than to prefer it and to give privileges to its leader.

[643] [288] It must be noted, however, that even this group of the horde did not wish to choose Ishim as khan except under certain conditions. They asked that he become an independent sovereign (autocrat), that he not recognize the suzerainty of Russia, and that to this end he should withdraw into the interior of the steppes toward the Syr Darya. Ishim, who was accustomed to basing all his hopes on the protection of the Russian rulers, informed the Orenburg authorities of the demands of his people himself, adding that Syrym's followers were not only preventing him [664 681] from trying to find the bandits and pursue them, but were also exacting from him a kun /blood price/, or payment of 2,000 sheep, for having sent to Orenburg shortly before two Kazaks who were famous for their banditry. Ishim's frankness and his promise not [643] to go away from the Russian border led the government to use all its efforts to cause him to be elected khan. In mid-September of